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MONTREAL The Gazette SINCE 1778

FIRST EDITION THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2000 57¢ OUTSIDE METRO AREA 70¢

BUSH VS. GORE Battle gets still more complex

DAN BALZ
Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The battle for Florida exploded across multiple fronts yesterday, with local officials scrambling to meet a Sunday deadline for completing their recounts, lawyers for Vice President Al Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush racing from courtroom to courtroom and Republicans state legislators weighing whether to intervene in the dispute over the state's 25 electoral votes.

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Please see RECOUNT, Page A2

Unprecedented Page A23
Knuckledown and egghead Page B3

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Unprecedented Page A23
Knuckledown and egghead Page B3

Mad-cow disease found in Spain

Scare spreading throughout Europe

Rosier

PARIS — Europe's mad cow crisis deepened yesterday as Spain reported its first case of the disease, and scientists warned that the continent could face a British-style epidemic.

In France, where the latest consumer scare started last month over potentially tainted beef on supermarket shelves, farm ministry officials said six new cases of the fatal disease had been detected among cattle.

That brought the number of cases of mad cow disease identified in France this year to 109, against just 50 in 1999.

The new findings were certain to put more pressure on the French government, struggling to convince worried consumers that beef is safe to eat and to placate angry farmers who fear plunging beef sales will cost them their livelihoods.

Greece yesterday joined four other European Union countries — Italy, Spain, Austria and the Netherlands — in imposing partial bans on French

Wanted: election staff

Shortage so dire that party reps might have to play neutral roles

DAVID JOHNSTON
The Gazette

With just four days to go before election day, Elections Canada admitted yesterday it has nowhere near enough staff to run the election Monday in the greater Montreal area.

The shortage of polling clerks, deputy return officers and registration officers is so acute that the Elections Canada concedes it might

have to involve a special section of the Elections Act and commandeer political-party representatives at polling stations into officially neutral roles as Elections Canada employees.

It would be the political equivalent of a jury roundup in the judicial system, whereby a judge authorizes court officials to go out into the streets and round up potential jurors.

Please see SHORTAGE, Page A13

More inside

Be gentlemen: Chrétien. Page A10
Support for Liberals down. Page A12
Anti-Alberta joke. Page A13
Back-to-back heavyweights. Page A14
Young people wooed. Page A16
Liberals by default: editorial. Page B2
Whitewash: Martin. Page B3
Power dressing. Page E4

CANADA VOTES

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Please see RECOUNT, Page A2

CASHING IN ON CANADIAN BARGAINS



"I am having a really good time," smiles Carol Coleman of Atlanta, who estimates she dropped close to \$800 in two days of shopping in Montreal.

U.S. shoppers save a bundle

SUSAN SEMENAK
The Gazette

It's any shopper's dream come true. This week, Carol Coleman spent a leisurely afternoon downtown at the Eaton Centre and bought a reversible black coat on sale for \$249, a half-price hat for \$12.99 and a pair of "awesomely beautiful" blue silk suit

reduced to \$99 from \$200 that she simply could not resist. Among other things, she got another 50 per cent off on all her purchases — even though she didn't have a scratch card or a coupon.

And finally at the end of her shopping spree, Coleman collected all her bills and applied for a refund of the 7 per cent GST.

With 12 shopping days till Christmas, it's the best sale in town. But it's not open to all those Montrealers who've been prowling the malls in search of pre-holiday bargains.

Coleman is from Atlanta, and she's shopping with cold hard U.S. greenbacks. The prices she paid are in Canadian dollars, but when she receives her credit-card bill at the end of the month,

it will have been converted to U.S. currency. And on Monday, when she made her purchases, the Canadian dollar was worth 64.18 U.S. cents. So the coat will have cost her \$160 U.S., the skirt \$21 and the suit \$64. (There's also the \$24 GST refund to which she is eligible as a non-resident.)

Please see BARGAINS, Page A7

JITEC CEO quits as scandal deepens

Scandal surrounding Jitec Inc. deepened yesterday with the announcement that chief executive Benoit Laliberté had resigned amid revelations that more than \$1 million had been diverted from company coffers.

DON MACDONALD
The Gazette

The scandal surrounding Jitec Inc. deepened yesterday with the announcement that chief executive Benoit Laliberté had resigned amid revelations that more than \$1 million had been diverted from company coffers.

A Jitec statement said Laliberté had received "certain advances" totaling \$865,000 from the company without the knowledge or consent of the board of directors.

Jitec said another \$1.2 million is missing, involving sales of inventory from stores previously owned by Jitec and transfers of accounts receivable to companies related to Laliberté.

The statement said Laliberté had agreed to reimburse the \$865,000 by Dec. 15. It also said the \$1.2 million "is expected to be repaid to Jitec in monthly instalments over the next six months, but didn't specify who will repay it."

Jitec, a Nune's Island high-tech company, was already reeling from a Quebec Securities Commission order in September that prohibits Laliberté from trading in company stock.

Please see JITEC, Page A2

INSIDE

MONTREAL

Local charges added in sex-crime case

San Michael (Chesman), a Montrealer who faces 40 charges in Ontario arising from sex crimes against children, is charged with preying on two girls in the West Island. Page A3

BIOLOGY

Biotech industry the next big thing

Biological technology is poised to be the revolutionary technology of the new century, which could be a boon for Montreal, columnist Jay Bryn writes. Page C6

SPORTS

Loria, Samson tell all

Jeffrey Loria and David Samson of the Expos tell columnist Jack Todd about their stadium plans and how the economics of baseball will affect the club in the future. Page C7

CHRISTMAS FUND

Cramped quarters

Twenty years old and without a high school diploma, Jessica sleeps on a futon in her living room and gives the bedroom in her apartment to her two sons. Page A6

WEATHER

Sunny breaks

Today's high: -3
Tonight's low: -9
Details, Page B6

INDEX

Auto Plus D1
Boone A2
Bridge D3
Brownstein A4
Bryant C4
Business C4
Classified D1
Comics D1
Crosswords B4
Current B4
Dunham E14
Editorial B2
Entertainment E8
Gardening E4
Health E1
Horoscope D8

Laurels A2
Legal/Auctions D8
Letters E2
Mourning A4
Murder A3
My Pet World E5
Nunavut D7
Obituaries E10
Ottawa B9
Sawtooth C4
Sports C1
Sweet E14
Talent E14
Toll E14
TV Listings E12
What's On E10
Who's Up E12
Wonderworld D7

QUOTE

All sins are attempts to fill voids.
Simone Weil

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